

## Retrouvaille by maya777

**Category:** I Am Not Okay with This (TV 2020), IT (Movies - Muschietti), IT - Stephen King, Knives Out (2019), Shazam! (2019), Stranger Things (TV 2016), Teen Wolf (TV), The Maze Runner Series - All Media Types

**Genre:** Multi

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Billy Batson, Brenda (Maze Runner), Corey Bryant, Dina (I Am Not Okay with This), Jacob Thrombey, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Liam Dunbar, Lydia Martin, Mason Hewitt, Meg Thrombey, Minho (Maze Runner), Nancy Wheeler, Newt (Maze Runner), Scott McCall (Teen Wolf), Stanley Barber, Steve Harrington, Stiles Stilinski, Sydney Novak, The Losers Club (IT), The Party (Stranger Things), Thomas (Maze Runner)

**Relationships:** Ben Hanscom & Meg Thrombey, Ben Hanscom/Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough/St Stanley Uris, Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier, Stanley Barber & Sydney Novak, Will Byers/Mike Wheeler

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**Summary:**

retrouvaille

(n.)

the joy of meeting or finding someone again after a long separation; rediscovery

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After the summer of demonic clowns, the Losers move out of Derry, one by one, and eventually, Ben is the only one left. The weird thing is, they all promised to write, but Ben never heard from them again. But somehow, in the summer of 1993, they all end up back in Derry.

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This started as a joke and now I'm invested in the plot line help-  
Also, it's unedited and probably shit so... enjoy!

# 1. Prologue

## Notes for the Chapter:

CW: referenced child abuse

It all started at the end of the summer of 1989.

That was when Beverly had moved away. She had said she was going to Portland, Maine, but the Losers' letters had started coming back to Derry, unopened with a big, red, 'RETURN TO SENDER' stamp on the front. The Losers stopped trying to contact her after two months. They figured she either didn't have time for them anymore or had moved and forgotten to tell them. Both ways hurt, but they moved on eventually.

Next was Richie. Social services had finally caught on when he came to school with bruises one day that winter, so they took him from his parents and sent him to live with his Aunt, Uncle, and two cousins, Nancy and Holly, in Indiana. Richie was very reluctant to go - he had even tried to convince Stan to keep him as a fugitive in the Uris' basement - but he was eventually forced out of Derry. They never heard from him again.

After Richie was Eddie. The Losers had been hanging out at the quarry one day in early 1990, jumping into the water as they usually did, but Eddie jumped at the wrong angle and broke his leg on a rock. Stan said he could hear the snap from the top of the cliff. It was terrible. They got him home safely - well, as safely as they could, balancing a seriously injured person on the back of a bike - and endured the rage of Mrs. K, who mostly screamed at them and cried at Eddie. She took him to the hospital, as expected, and while they were there, Eddie finally built up the courage to tell the doctors what his mother had been doing. The fake medicine, the isolation, the yelling and arguments, all of it. The doctors told social services, and social services took Eddie away from Mrs. K, who was furious. There were no living Kaspbraks remaining, so Eddie was put into the foster care system. The remaining Losers begged their parents to take in Eddie, but no one could - or they refused to. Eddie ended up being sent to Pennsylvania to live with a house full of other foster kids.

Eddie also never spoke to the Losers again.

Stan followed Eddie. His parents said they were tired of his bullshit or something - Stan wasn't really listening - and decided to send him to live with his uncle for a few years, starting in the summer of 1990. When the Losers found out he was going to Pennsylvania, they begged him to find Eddie, and they made sure it was drilled into his brain that he *had to contact them*, or they would hunt them down and kill him. Stan agreed to the conditions, and said goodbye to the three remaining Losers. Stan never contacted them, and they never hunted down and killed him.

Bill never even got a chance to say goodbye to the Losers. He just stopped showing up at the quarry, stopped calling them, stopped going to school. One day in early 1991, he just disappeared. Ben and Mike had gone to the Denbrough's to ask about Bill, but when they asked, Mr. and Mrs. Denbrough just asked who Bill was. Neither Mike nor Ben had any idea where Bill might be - they considered It, but ruled it out. They figured It must be dead, and wouldn't be back for 27 years. The two boys searched and searched for any sign of Bill anywhere, but it was like he had been erased from existence.

The last Loser to leave Derry was Mike. His grandfather, who had been quite old, passed away over the summer of 1991, leaving Mike by himself, so Mike was sent to live with his Aunt, Uncle, and cousin, Mason, in Beacon Hills, California. Mason was a year younger than Mike, but he seemed nice enough over the phone. Mike promised he would write, he promised over and over that he *wouldn't forget*.

But Ben was left all alone. No calls, no letters, no sign of him ever having any friends. He was back to being the new kid with no friends, except he wasn't new this time. He just didn't have any friends.

He tried to talk to people, he really did, but nobody really wanted to be friends with him. Everyone seemed to know that if they became friends with Ben Hanscom, they would automatically become targets for Bowers. That is, everyone except Meg, who moved to Derry in 1993. She had told Ben that it was a bullshit reason to not be friends with him, and any sane person would see that he's a great friend.

Meg ended up living in Ben's family's guest room. Meg never really fully explained it, but she said that something bad happened with her family and she seriously needed to leave. Ben knew not to pry, so he just didn't question her. He offered the guest room to her, and she gratefully accepted.

So it had been Ben and Meg for a few months. No Losers, just Ben and Meg. Ben never brought up the Losers or the summer of 1989 to Meg, and Meg never asked why he didn't like to talk about his past. They were in a silent agreement where some things were better kept secret. The agreement worked out pretty well for them.

Until the summer of 1993.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

So uh... this started as a joke, but I hope it's good  
kwrjgbwkrbgkw

## 2. Beverly

### Notes for the Chapter:

CW: referenced smoking and drug use

Beverly decided as soon as she moved that she *definitely* liked Maine better than Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania was nice and all, but Maine just felt more like home. Like she had some sort of strong connection to it. Well, she knew for a fact that she had a strong connection to it, considering the demonic clown she had killed and all that.

But she really missed the Losers too.

No one in Portland wanted to be friends with the weird girl who refused to talk about anything from her past, and it wasn't much different in Pennsylvania. People avoided her like the plague, and she had no friends. No one to talk to, except for her cousin. She remained the new kid, getting teased by the neighborhood bullies, just like old times in Derry, until another new kid came to town.

Dina.

Beverly knew how it felt to be the new kid that no one wanted to talk to, so she thought she would make it a bit easier for Dina. On the first day of school in 1989, Beverly sat with Dina outside the school. Dina looked up, surprised, then smiled.

"Hi, I'm Dina," she said, sticking out her hand.

"Hi," Beverly shook her hand, "I'm... Sydney."

Beverly didn't know why she said her name was Sydney, but she decided she liked it. Dina kept conversation with her until the bell rang, then Sydney went to the front office to get her name changed in the system. She was no longer Beverly Marsh, she was Sydney Marsh. She went to class, corrected all the teachers who got it wrong, and by the end of the day, she was known as Sydney. It was like Beverly never existed.

In fact, Sydney spent less and less time thinking about Derry, and more and more time thinking about her new life in Pennsylvania - and why the hell weird stuff happened every time she got angry. She spent so little time thinking about her past that eventually, it faded away, like it was on the other side of a fog that she just barely couldn't see through.

It turned out that Dina really didn't need Sydney's help making friends - she was a natural. Everyone seemed to flock to her, like moths to a flame. Sydney still wasn't very popular, but that didn't stop her from making a couple friends.

The first one after Dina was Eddie. Nobody really cared to learn more than just the fact that he was a foster kid with a leg problem, but Sydney found that once she got to know him, he was actually a great person to be around. They never really talked about why he was a foster kid. Sydney suspected that it had something to do with his abundance of placebo medication and him refusing to speak about his mother, but she didn't want to pry and push him away, so she let him be.

After Eddie was Stanley. They weren't really friends at the start, just neighbors, but once Sydney finally agreed to hang out with him, he was actually pretty cool. They were the type of friends who could be around each other without talking and still enjoy themselves. They didn't need to have full conversations to be friends, just being around each other was enough. Sydney spent most of her time in Stan's basement, smoking and listening to Blood Witch with him. Eddie always gagged and told them how much of a health concern smoking was when he went into Stan's basement. Sydney and Stan always laughed, and Eddie always left, refusing to hang out with them until they got rid of that "disgusting smoke smell."

But, behind all that good stuff, there was something... off.

Sydney had absolutely no idea what was wrong with her. Every time she got even just a tiny bit mad or scared or annoyed or jealous, everything went to shit. There were nosebleeds, cracks in walls, destroyed street signs, flying bowling balls. It was terrible, and Sydney could only wonder how long it would be until she hurt somebody. She had considered running away and hiding in the forest

or something multiple times, but she never did. Stan and Eddie helped. They were the only ones that knew about her problem. Both by accident, of course. Stan had accidentally seen her flattening a forest, and Eddie had come over to Stan's house once while they were practicing controlling her powers. Sydney had thought about telling Dina a few times, but she never did. She couldn't risk losing her.

So, Sydney was fine with her new life. She enjoyed being around Dina, Stan, and Eddie, and she didn't even really hate Pennsylvania that much anymore. She never thought about Derry, and she never thought to make contact with the Losers. They were the farthest thing from her mind, what with her problems with telekinesis and magic shit, so she forgot about them completely.

That is, until the summer of 1993.



### 3. Richie

#### Notes for the Chapter:

CW: bullying and violence (not graphic)

Hawkins was a lot calmer than Derry.

That was the first thing Richie noticed when he arrived at his new home. Every time he went back to his trashmouth self, Ted would tell him to watch his language, or Karen would say, “Not around Holly!” The Losers would never tell Richie to watch his language. Well, maybe Ben would, but besides him, no one would.

The second thing Richie noticed when he arrived in Hawkins was the arcade. They had Street Fighter, as expected, so that was where he spent his winter break, playing Street Fighter and trying to hold onto the memories that seemed farther away every day.

The games also helped him not be so sad. He really *really* missed Derry. Well, not the killer clown aspect, but the arcade aspect, the safe quarry for swimming aspect, the having friends aspect, the kissing bridge aspect, the Losers aspect, *especially* the Eddie aspect, not that Richie would ever tell anyone.

One day, in the arcade, someone joined him for a game. After a few rounds of Richie beating him, the boy turned to Richie.

“I’m Troy, what’s your name?”

“I’m Richie, Richie Tozier.” Richie grinned, but his smile dropped as Troy snorted.

“Richie Tozier? What kind of name is that? It sounds stupid.” Troy shook his head and turned back to the game. “Another round, Rich Tochair?”

“Uh... n-no. I think I’ll head home now.” Richie backed away from the game and turned to leave the arcade.

“Alright. See you around, Tochair.”

Richie was distracted as he left the arcade, not watching where he was going, so he was startled when he ran into another boy knocking his glasses to the ground. The boy laughed. "Nice glasses, loser." Richie heard breaking glass, then felt someone shove him to the ground and walk inside. Richie scooted towards the arcade, trying to be out of the way for more people coming and leaving.

Richie didn't know how long he was sitting there, huddled up against the wall of the arcade, trying to stay warm while waiting for his cousin, Nancy, to pick him up, but after a while, he heard someone step in the broken glass of his glasses.

"Shit, whose glasses are these?" A blurry figure reached down and picked up Richie's mangled glasses frames.

"I don't know, look for someone who looks blind."

"How do people look blind, Lucas?"

"I don't know, running into things? Staring blankly into space?"

"The person might've just had them as reading glasses and were able to walk away, right?"

"No way, look at that glass. It's, like, magnifying the dirt."

Richie was about to speak up and tell them that the glasses were his when he felt a sharp pain in his side. Someone had kicked him. Richie yelped and grabbed his side, drawing the attention of the three boys standing around his glasses.

"You're in the way, freak. Move," The blurry figure demanded.

Richie waved his arms, gesturing to his glasses. "Well, I cant exactly fucking see, can I?" Another kick to his side, then-

"Hey! Stop it!"

The bully turned to the boys who were standing by Richie's glasses and scoffed.

"Losers standing up for another loser. Pathetic."

Richie scoffed right back at him. “Y’know what’s even more pathetic? Your comebacks. Honestly, get some new mat-” Richie was cut off with a groan as he was kicked again. Richie tried to crawl away, but got pushed to the ground again.

“Got somewhere to be, Toechair?” Great. Troy.

“Just going to meet your mother, Troy, we had big plans tonight.”

Troy scowled and went to push Richie again, but one of the nice boys pushed him out of the way before he could. “Stop it!”

Troy towered over the shorter boy and scowled. “Don’t test me, Byers.”

Byers stood up as tall as he could, still shorter than Troy, and said, “No. Y- *you* don’t test *me*. ”

Before the situation could escalate, a police siren sounded from the parking lot. Troy looked at the other bullies with wide eyes and yelled, “RUN!” then ran back into the building, trying to hide in the crowd.

The sheriff, who had been controlling the siren, came over to the four remaining boys and frowned. “What’s going on here?”

“Troy was kicking and yelling at... uh...” The boy with black hair turned to Richie.

Richie realized they didn’t know his name. He was about to say Richie, but then he remembered the bully’s words.

*What kind of name is that? It sounds stupid.*

“Mike,” Richie blurted out. “Mike Wheeler.”

He didn’t know why he picked Mike, it just seemed... important, for some reason. He picked Wheeler because it was his Aunt and Uncle’s last name, but Mike was completely random, yet somehow, it was also familiar. Like he knew someone named Mike before.

“Well, Mike Wheeler, let’s get you home.” The sheriff, Hopper, his

name tag said, interrupted Richie's thoughts.

"No, it's fine, really, my sister is coming to get me in a couple minutes." *Sister?! Stop lying!!*

"You sure?" Hopper asked. Mike nodded. "Alright." Hopper turned to the nice boys. "Can you three wait here with him until his sister gets here?"

The three boys nodded and mumbled their agreement, then sat down on the ground next to Mike as Hopper returned to his car. They sat in silence for a moment, until Mike spoke.

"So... thanks. Y'know. For standing up for me."

"No problem, Mike," the short boy patted Mike's shoulder, "We've gotten our fair share of bullying from them, and we know what it feels like, so. I'm Will, by the way."

"Oh yeah, and I'm Dustin."

"I'm Lucas."

"Nice to meet you guys." Mike did his best attempt at a smile in what he hoped was the right direction. When Mike got home that night, he asked for contact lenses, and he never told the Party that those glasses were his.

The four boys were friends from then on, and Mike never really thought about Derry again. Sometimes he would get deja-vu, like when they were at the Quarry or when he was saying he didn't want Max in the group, and wonder what it could be from, but otherwise, his mind was occupied by D&D, Demogorgons, El, and his best friend, Will (who reminded Richie a lot of Eddie, but Mike had no idea).

## 4. Stan

### Notes for the Chapter:

CW: one sentence reference to drug use

*Remember. Remember. Remember.*

Stan chanted this to himself for days on end when he arrived in Pennsylvania. He had made a promise to the Losers, a promise to find Eddie, and he wasn't going to break this promise.

*Remember. Remember. Remember.*

He was pretty sure the memory loss had something to do with It. There was no other reason why Beverly, Richie, and Eddie would all just stop talking to them. The Losers were stuck together for life, blood oath and everything, there was no way they could just... forget. Stan's new mission, he decided, was to find Eddie, Beverly, and Richie and bring them back to Derry so they wouldn't forget again. Stan was determined, he was stubborn, and he was *not going to forget*.

*Remember. Remember. Remember.*

About a day after Stan arrived in Pennsylvania, he could already feel his memory slipping. He kept having to remind himself of what he was remembering, who he was remembering, why he was remembering. It was getting harder and harder to pull those wisps of memories back. It was like they were melting away, one by one, leaving Stan oblivious to anything that had happened before he moved to Pennsylvania. After a while, Stan started to notice that there was hardly anything left.

*Remember. Remember. Remember.*

Stan tried so hard to remember. He tried everything from just thinking really hard to hypnosis, but every time he came even a tiny bit close to remembering, a strong strike of fear went through his heart, and it made him so scared that he gave up trying to remember.

He followed the saying that if he was meant to remember, he would remember.

*Remember. Remember. Remember.*

On his first day of school, Stan met Sydney. She seemed pretty cool, and Stan didn't have any friends, so he decided to strike up a conversation with her and try to become friends. It didn't work. Sydney seemed very uninterested in the conversation, and Stan respected that, so he left her alone. But something about her seemed really familiar....

*Remember. Remember. Remember.*

Once Sydney finally started talking to Stan, through invitation of getting high and Blood Witch in Stan's basement, Stan got to meet her other friends. Dina and Eddie. They seemed really nice, and they seemed to like Stan, so Stan became friends with them too. Again, something about Eddie felt really familiar, but Stan dismissed it as having seen him around school before.

*Remember. Remember. Remember...*

When Stan found out about Sydney's powers, he thought they were awesome. Of course they were terrifying as fuck, but they were also *so cool*. But the weird thing about the whole situation was that when he first saw her powers in action, in the forest, his first thought was ' *hell no, I've had enough supernatural for one lifetime* ' but as far as Stan could remember, he had never experienced anything even slightly supernatural.

*Remember. Remember... Remember...*

Sometimes, Stan woke up abruptly from a nightmare, sweating and panting, images of clowns and flutes and messed up faces and red balloons floating in front of his eyes. Sometimes, Stan woke up slowly from a dream, smiling and happy, images of shower caps and comic books and seven kids riding their bikes down the street and the quarry floating in front of his eyes. Sometimes, Stan woke up from dream-mares, smiling with thick tears running down his face, images of a boy with auburn hair and blue eyes and a stutter floating in his

distant memory, threatening to disappear if he didn't grab for it. He always reached, he reached as far as he could, but the boy always disappeared.

*Remember... Remember... Remember....*

*What was I supposed to remember?*

## 5. Bill

### Notes for the Chapter:

CW: violence/fighting

*“Why’d you d-do it? Why’d you take him? Of all p-people, why Juh-G-Georgie?”*

*“Because you weren’t there, Billy.”*

*You weren’t there.*

*You weren’t there!*

*YOU WEREN'T THERE.*

*YOU WEREN'T THERE!*

*YOU WEREN'T THERE!*

*“MIKE!”*

Mike jolted awake, quickly backing away from the figure laying in the hammock next to him. He had been having the dreams ever since he arrived in the Glade two months before. They didn’t quite scare him anymore, but he was still jumpy whenever he woke up. Newt understood and helped. Mike didn’t know who Billy or Georgie were, but he really wanted to know. And he wanted to know why Billy wasn’t there, and why Georgie got taken.

*“Woah, Mike, calm down, it’s just me. It’s just Newt, you’re alright.”* Mike, short for Michael, was his Maze name. He didn’t know his real one, but Mike seemed significant for some reason. Maybe Mike *was* his real name. Mike had no idea. He rubbed his eyes as Newt scooted closer to hug him. *“You alright? You were screaming about some clown...”*

*“Yeah, f-fine.”* Mike pushed Newt back towards his hammock. *“Go to suh-sleep, there’s a Guh-Greenie coming tomorrow, you need r-rest.”*



Newt laughed and sat on his hammock. “What kind of Greenie do you think he’ll be? Like me, like you, like Chuck, or like Alby?”

“Well...” Mike thought for a moment. “Ch-Chuck was scared out of his mind, Ah-Alby was immediately put t-together and r-responsible, you.... y-y-yeah and I was just really shucking confused, so,” Mike laughed, “g-guess we’ll see.”

Newt nodded and rocked his hammock back and forth. “I bet he’ll be like Alby. It’s been a while since we got an Alby.”

“Well, you’re kind of like A-Alby. You’re really buh-brave.”

“Yeah right,” Newt shook his head, “I’m not brave, Mikey.”

“Oh, please,” Mike poked Newt’s arm, “you’re m-much braver than me.”

“Doubtful.”

“S-Stop being humble. And seriously, go to suh-sleep.”

“I still don’t agree with you.”

“F-Fine.”

“Fine.”

“Fi-”

“Oh my GOD will both of you *please shut up* for fuck’s sake-”

“Language, Minho!”

“Sorry, Newt. I meant for shuck’s sake.”

“I’m sure you did. Goodnight both of you.”

“G’night.”

“N-Night.”

Mike didn’t get much sleep that night. He couldn’t get those words,

those names, out of his head.

*Georgie*

*Billy*

*YOU WEREN'T THERE*

It felt like something was poking at the back of his brain, trying to make him remember why these words were significant, but, just like all the other boys in the Glade, he remembered nothing. No names, no places, no people, nothing.

The next day, the box came up, just like every month. All the Gladers ran to surround it, leaning over shoulders to get a glimpse inside. Newt pushed to the front, pulling Mike behind him, and helped Gally and Alby pull the cover open. As the cover slowly creaked open, Mike leaned over the edge to see the new boy, but when he saw the inside of the box, he jerked backwards, tripping over a few other boys.

Inside the box, there were hundreds of red balloons.

And sitting in the middle was a clown. *The clown.*

Mike, having fallen on the ground, quickly crawled away from the box, got to his feet, and started to run towards the kitchens. He rushed in, grabbed the biggest knife he could find, and ran back out to the box, ready to fight the clown. He didn't know where this instinct came from, but he had a really strong feeling that he had done all this before, like déjà vu.

When Mike returned to the box, knife in hand, everyone was looking at him weirdly, like he was crazy. He looked around at their confused faces, then pointed into the box, where the clown was creepily stalking towards the small boy huddled in the corner. "Duh-Don't you s-see i-it?"

Gally squinted into the box. "What, the boy?"

"N-No," Mike aggressively gestured at the box, "the c-clown! Don't you see it? And all the buh-b-balloons?"

"Mike, I don't see anything." Newt put a comforting hand on Mike's shoulder. "How about you put the knife down, yeah?"

Everyone looked back and forth between Mike and the box, muttering about how he was crazy and there was nothing there.

Everyone except the boy in the box.

He was staring at the clown, his face pale and his eyes wide. He could definitely see it. All of a sudden, the boy's eyes darted to make contact with Mike's. He whimpered, looked at the clown - which was right in front of him now, pulling at his hair and poking his cheeks -, looked back at Mike, and whispered, "Help me, please."

Mike pulled his arm away from Newt and pushed through the crowd, then jumped into the box. He quickly moved to be behind the clown, then drove his knife into its back. The boy sitting in front of Mike gasped and winced as the clown's blood squirted onto him. The clown slowly turned around and glared menacingly at Mike, then said, in a very distorted voice, "That wasn't very nice, was it?" It pulled the knife out of its back and waved it in Mike's face, flicking blood everywhere. "Friends don't stab each other in the back, B-B-Billy. Aren't you my friend?"

"N-No," Mike replied in a shaky voice.

"Oh, well that's too bad, isn't it?" It smiled sinisterly. "Georgie was my friend."

"G-Go away." Mike, who had been walking backwards away from the clown, ran into the wall of the box, causing the whole thing to shake.

"But don't you want a balloon, Billy? A nice red balloon?" The clown pulled a balloon from the cloud and held it out to Mike.

"GO AWAY!" Mike shouted. He glanced over the clown's shoulder and saw the boy standing up, grabbing a metal pole, and stepping closer, around the side of the clown.

"*Nobody wants to play with Pennywise the Dancing Clown,*" It hissed. "*Nobody ever wants to float with m-*"

It was cut off as the boy shouted and plunged the pole into Its eye, through Its face, and out Its chin. It stumbled backwards, away from Mike and the boy, then fell to the ground.

It looked at the boy, giggled, and whispered, "You're afraid, little boy, aren't you? Weak little human. Tasty fear."

"GO TO HELL, YOU STUPID FUCKING CLOWN," Bill shouted as he kicked It in the stomach, shoving it to the ground across the box. It giggled, then melted like ice, down through the floor grate, dripping down into the black abyss beneath them. All the balloons popped as soon as It was out of view. The boy who had been sitting in the box sighed and rubbed his eyes.

"What... the actual fuck... was that?" he said slowly and quietly.

"Pennywise the Dancing Clown, I guess." Bill turned to the new boy. "I'm Mike, by the way."

The boy smiled - as much as he could smile after being attacked by a demonic clown. "Thomas. Why did it keep calling you Billy?"

"I don't know. Why c-couldn't anyone else s-see it?"

"I don't know."

"Okay, someone wanna explain what the shuck just happened?" Gally yelled down into the box.

Mike looked at Thomas, who shrugged, then turned to Gally. "We n-need to discuss f-first. We'll tell you once we actually f-figure out what h-happened."

"But--"

"Gally," Newt cut him off sternly, then turned to Mike and Thomas, "yes. Be quick please."

Mike helped Thomas out of the box, then walked into the woods with him. They walked around for about a half hour, trying to figure out what might be happening, and came up with nothing. When they returned to the Glade, they tried to explain what they saw to Alby.

Alby said they had never seen anything like that in the Glade or the Maze, and that they needed to tell him if they saw It again. The boys agreed, then went back to the hammocks to discuss more - and so that Thomas could change, seeing as he was still covered in the clown's blood, even if no one but the two boys could see it. Once again, they came up with nothing.

The next day, Teresa arrived.

Then everything went to shit.

## 6. Mike

It had been a year since Mike arrived in Beacon Hills.

His first impression of his family had been correct, they were all very nice. He didn't really hate it there. At first he had been a little homesick, but after a couple months, he stopped thinking about Derry altogether. He was happy, and all he remembered about Derry was that it was bad, so he was glad to be out of it. The only thing drawing his attention back to Derry was the missing boy.

Stiles Stilinski was his name. He had gone missing about a year before Mike moved to Derry, so it had been around two years at that point, but they finally found him again, just a few weeks ago. He had severe amnesia, he couldn't remember anything from before he went missing and he kept calling himself Thomas, but he was back, and that was what mattered. He slowly began to remember, and eventually, he was almost back to how he was before he went missing, but there was still something... off. He was more jumpy, less humorous, and he always had a knife with him.

The night before their first day of Sophomore year, Stiles woke Mike and Scott up to look for a dead body in the woods.

Everything was going fine, they had gotten into the woods without being caught, Scott had remembered to bring his inhaler - which weirdly made Mike think of fanny packs, but he didn't know why - and Stiles had remembered the flashlight. But of course, Stiles forgot that his father would be looking through the woods too.

"Stop, stop, that's my delinquent." Noah stepped forward and frowned at Stiles. "What are you doing out here."

Stiles looked at the ground and muttered, "Looking for the body."

"Hm. And where are your partners in crime?"

"Who, Scott and Mike?" Stiles scoffed and patted his father's shoulder. "Worry not, they're both asleep in their respective homes."

“Oh really?” Noah shined his flashlight through the trees and called, “MIKE! SCOTT! COME ON OUT!” Mike winced as the light hit his shoulder, knowing he had been seen. Scott, who was behind the tree next to him, shrugged apologetically. “Come on out, Mike, I can see you.”

Mike slowly walked out from behind the tree and cringed at the bright lights facing him. “Sorry, Sheriff Stilinski, I forced Stiles to come out here, it’s my fault.”

Noah laughed. “While I appreciate your want to protect your friends, I know for a fact that Stiles did this. Now, how about I give you two a ride home?”

“No,” Stiles quickly cut off his father. “Thanks, but no, I should get Roscoe-”

“Stiles, that was not an offer. I’m taking you home.” Noah grabbed Stiles’ shoulder and pulled him toward the car. “You too Mike.”

“No, it’s okay, I’ll get Roscoe.” Mike inched back towards the tree where Scott was.

“Mike-“

“Will all due respect, Sheriff, you’re not my parents, so you can’t exactly force me to go home.”

One of the deputies, Parrish, snorted. Noah shook his head. “I may not be your parents, but I am the Sheriff. And I’m telling you that I’m taking you home. Now get in the damn car.”

Mike sighed, glanced back into the woods, debated making a run for it, then got into the car with Stiles. The ride home was silent and awkward, so Mike was relieved to be home. However, he was not relieved when he walked inside to see Mason sitting in the living room.

“Mason, what are you doing up?” Mike yawned and checked the time. 2:27 a.m. “You have school tomorrow. First day of eighth grade, right?”

Mason shrugged. "So do you. First day of Sophomore year, right?"

Mike sighed and laughed. "Touché." Saying that made him think of a hammock, really big glasses, and a lot of dirt. Weird.

"So," Mason patted the spot next to him on the couch, and Mike sat down, "where were you?"

"Stiles wanted to look for that body in the woods. Don't tell your mom and dad I was out, okay? They would freak out."

"I won't. Did you find it?"

"Find what?"

"The body."

"Oh, no we didn't. Sheriff caught us before we could." Just then, Mike remembered Scott. "Speaking of which, I need to go do something. See you in the morning, okay? Seriously, *get some sleep*."

Mason groaned as Mike ran up the stairs. "Fine. See you tomorrow."

Mike ran into his room as quietly as he could, went straight for the dresser, and grabbed his walkie talkie.

"Scott? Scott, come in, are you okay? Are you hurt? Over."

There was a moment of static where Mike suspected the worst, then, "*Mike? Is that you? Over.*"

Mike sighed in relief. "Yeah, it's me. Are you okay? Over."

"*No... I think something's wrong... Over.*"

"How so? Over." Mike waited for a response, but none came. "Scott? What's happening? Over." Still nothing. "Scott?! Are you alive?!"

"*Yeah, I'm fine, sorry. Just almost got hit by a car. But... something bit me. Over.*"

"Holy shit, do you know what it was? Over."



*“ It.... I mean, this is gonna sound crazy, but it looked... almost like... a wolf? I don’t know, maybe. ”*

Images of a white, gloved hand growing wolf claws flashed into Mike’s head, then disappeared as soon as they came. When he came back to reality, Scott was still talking.

*“ Also, I found the other half of the body. over. ”*

“No way! What did it look like?”

*“ Disgusting. I need that memory to be, like, wiped away. For good. Over. ”*

Mike laughed, then remembered that Scott was still stranded in the woods. “Do you need me to come pick you up or something? Over.”

*“ No, I’m almost home now. ”*

“I- You walked? Seriously? Over.”

*“ Yup, all the way home. Oh, shit, I forgot my inhaler. ”*

“Don’t worry, Eds, Richie always keeps a spare-” Mike, who had been having the conversation on autopilot while he put his pajamas on, froze. “Uh... I mean... don’t you keep a spare at home? Over.”

*“Mike... who the hell are Eds and Richie? Over.”*

“I... I really don’t know... Over.”

“ Okay... ” Scott said slowly. *“ Just... get some sleep, okay? Over. ”*

“Yeah, you too. Goodnight. Over”

*“ Goodnight. Over and out. ”*

As much as Mike tried, he couldn’t sleep. He really *really* wanted to know who Richie and Eddie were. He thought back through his childhood, trying to remember names of friends. But as he was thinking, he realized something.

He didn’t remember anything.

## 7. Eddie

### Notes for the Chapter:

CW: slight reference to child abuse

“What happened to your leg?”

“A clown ate it. Now leave me alone.”

That was pretty much how Eddie’s first day in his new home went.

He was mad, understandably, and he just wanted to go back to Derry. He spent nearly all day in his room with the door locked, only allowing his foster mother, Rosa, and foster father, Victor, to come in and give him food. This was working perfectly for almost the entire first day.

Until he had to go to the bathroom.

He debated just holding it, then decided that it was unsafe and could cause him bladder problems, so he pulled himself out of bed, grabbed his crutch, and limped toward the door, then down the hall to the bathroom. He was *so close*, but then-

“Hi, you’re Eddie, I’m Darla, what happened to your leg?”

Eddie blinked down at the little girl in front of him, then gently pushed past her to continue into the bathroom, but much to his annoyance, she followed him in.

“Did you get bitten by a crocodile? That would be so cool. Did you try to get some bullies and they got you instead? Was-”

“Darla!” Eddie steered Darla outside of the bathroom. “I just need to go to the bathroom. I’m not ready to talk about it. Please, *please*, leave me alone.”

Darla stood there for a moment, then slowly nodded and turned around and started to walk down the hallway. Eddie was relieved to finally be able to go to the bathroom, but just before he closed the

bathroom door, he heard Darla sniffing. He debated for a second, then groaned and threw the door back open, grabbing his crutch and limping back down the hallway to where Darla was walking into her room.

“Hey, Darla?”

Darla stopped walking and turned back around, still sniffing. “W-what?”

“I’m... I’m really sorry, okay? I just don’t like to talk about it.” Eddie awkwardly patted Darla’s shoulder. “I’ll tell you at some point though, sound good?”

Darla smiled and nodded, then hugged Eddie, careful not to knock him over. When she pulled back, she giggled and pointed down the hall. “You can go to the bathroom now, Eddie.”

Darla didn’t ask about Eddie’s leg again, and Eddie didn’t bring it up. Not even Rosa and Victor knew what happened, or anything about Eddie’s past for that matter - well, they knew about what his mother did and his habits from her influence, so they tried to keep his areas in the house especially clean, but other than that, they knew next to nothing.

Eddie meant to tell Darla and the others eventually, he really did, but as the months passed, he found that he literally couldn’t. He couldn’t remember anything that had happened before moving to Pennsylvania. He didn’t know why his leg was hurt so badly, he didn’t know why he hated germs so much, he didn’t know why clowns scared the living shit out of him (although, to be fair, most clowns are pretty creepy), and he didn’t know why being called Eds bothered him so much. It wasn’t a bother in a “that’s annoying, don’t call me that” way, it was a bother in a “why can’t I remember why that name makes me so happy” way.

And he couldn’t explain why his heart jumped into his throat any time he saw a boy his age with curly black hair and glasses. It was weird, and he didn’t like it. Eddie was over it, and he wanted to go back to wherever he had come from.

The only thing that kept him from stealing a car and leaving Pennsylvania was his friendship with Sydney and Stanley (and sort of Dina). They gave him a sense of safety and comfort, even though he really didn't know them that well. They didn't ask about his leg, which was good, because he had no idea how he would explain that one. All of them (minus Dina) had been sent away, taken away, or had their parents taken to prison, so they understood each other in a way that not a lot of people could.

Turns out, they knew each other a lot more than they thought they did.

## 8. Beverly

Sydney was actually kind of looking forward to the prom.

She had been dreading it for weeks, but now that she was going with Dina, it didn't seem so bad. Of course, she also felt like she was dying inside because *where's my diary? What if someone has it? What if they show everyone? Dina would know. My powers. People would die.*

So, she tried to not think of those possibilities as much as she could.

On the day of the prom, as she was trying to drown out her own thoughts with Blood Witch, Stan burst into her room. They had become so close recently that he tended to just let himself into her house. He slammed the door open, stormed in, and dropped two suitcases on her floor, waiting for her to take her headphones off before speaking.

"Alright, Syd, pack your shit. We're going to Maine."

"I... what?"

Stan threw open one of the suitcases and started piling random clothes inside. "C'mon, help me."

Sydney shrugged and went into the kitchen to grab her jars of peanut butter. When she returned to her room, Stan had thrown almost everything she owned into the suitcases. She added the peanut butter to one of them. "Wanna tell me why we're going to Maine? And why we're packing like we're never coming back?"

"My *parents*," He spit the word like it was poison, "want to see me. I don't know why, but they technically still have custody over me, so I have to go. And I need you for emotional support."

Sydney walked over to Stan and hugged him, stopping him from packing. "Stan, you know I love you, but... I can't just leave my aunt and cousin. And also the prom, and Dina--"

"Dina's coming," Stan cut Sydney off as he pulled away and continued packing, "I went to her house before yours. She said as

long as it was okay with you, y'know with the prom and all, that she would go."

"Hm." Sydney sat on the edge of her bed. "Did you ask Eddie to come too?"

"Uh... no, actually, I haven't seen him in a week or so." Stan frowned and paused his frantic packing. "Have you?"

"No... He probably just went on a trip or something..."

"Yeah, probably..." Stan shook his head and returned to packing. "So, are you coming or not?"

Sydney looked at her almost empty room and laughed. "Looks like you decided that for me, Stan."

"Cool. Your aunt won't mind?"

"Probably not, but I'll ask anyway."

Turns out, her aunt did mind.

"No. You can't just leave, Sydney, Liam needs you," Maggie said as she packed for work.

"But-"

"No buts, Sydney! Please, just get Liam breakfast and make sure he makes it to the bus, okay? I'll see you tonight."

Sydney groaned and returned to her room, shaking her head at Stan, who also groaned and dropped onto Sydney's bed. Sydney frowned, then said, "Hold on a minute." and left the room again.

After checking to see that Maggie had left, Sydney went to Liam's room. She knocked on the door, and entered when Liam acknowledged her. "Hey, Goob, whatcha doing?"

"Packing for school." He looked up from his backpack. "What did Stan want? He looked mad. And he was carrying some huge suitcases."

“Yeah, about that...” Sydney sighed and thought about how to word her proposition. “How would you like to go on... a trip with me, Stan, and Dina?”

“What kind of trip?”

“Uh... a we don't know when it ends kind of trip?”

“Are you running away, Sydney?”

“No, Goob, I wouldn't leave you like that.” Sydney sighed and ran a hand through her hair. “We're going to visit Stan's parents, and he needs us to be there for him, and I can't just leave you here by yourself so... you wanna come?”

“Um... won't mom be angry?”

“I'll call her if it'll make you feel better about it.”

“Uh... okay, if you call her and she says yes, I'll come.”

Sydney smiled and messed up Liam's hair. “Sounds good, Goob. I'll go call her right now.”

Maggie still didn't like the idea, as expected, but Sydney was good at convincing.

“C'mon, aunt Maggie, Stan really needs me.”

*“He has Dina, doesn't he?”*

“Well... yeah, but I'm better friends with him. And I'm not leaving Liam behind, he's coming with us, and he'll be fine, okay?”

*“I don't like this, Sydney...”*

“I know, aunt Maggie, but... please. Please just let me go.”

“I...” Maggie sighed, and something crashed behind her. *“Oh shit, someone just broke something. I have to go, Sydney.”*

“So can I go?”

*"Yes, Sydney, fine, you can go. But if Liam even gets one scratch on him-"*

*"He'll be fine, aunt Maggie. Thank you so much. Love you."*

*"Love you too, Sydney. Call me when you get there?"*

*"Yup. Bye."*

*"Bye."*

Sydney went back into Liam's room, told him the news, and helped him pack. Then, Sydney, Stan, and Liam picked up Dina in the car they stole from Mr. Barber and began their drive to Derry, Maine.

About ten minutes into the drive, Liam said quietly, "Stan, I thought Mr. Barber was your dad." Sydney and Dina both subtly nodded.

Stan stayed quiet for a minute, then said, "No, he's my uncle. My parents live in Maine. They... I guess they just got tired of me or something, so they sent me to live with him."

"Stan, I'm so sorry." Dina, who was sitting in the passenger seat, reached across the console and squeezed Stan's shoulder.

Stan shrugged. "It's fine. I hated them anyway. It's getting kind of dark. Do you guys wanna keep driving or stop somewhere?"

Sydney looked out the window at the small "WELCOME TO HAMPDEN" sign. "Keep driving. This part of Maine gives me the creeps, I don't really wanna stay anywhere we don't know."

"Yeah, me too." Dina glanced at the sign, then back out the other window, where she could just barely see the lights from the town between them and Derry. Stan cranked up the volume on the radio, which was playing Fly by Blood Witch. He swayed back and forth in his seat, smiling a little, as they passed two cars - the only other cars they had seen for hours.

"Look, there's another one." Liam pointed to another small sign a bit down the road. As they got closer, they were able to read it, and what it said gave them all chills.



*“YOU’LL FLOAT TOO, LOSERS!”*

## 9. Richie

### Notes for the Chapter:

CW: mentions of kidnapping

“Michael, you need to get up!”

It was the day. The day they were going to see Will and El. Mike was not aware of this. Of course, he knew they were going to visit them, but he was in the state of waking up where he didn't know what day it was, where he was, or who kept yelling so loudly for him to get up. He just knew that his bed was comfortable and warm, and he had no plans to get up and move.

“Are you packed yet? You have to leave in an hour!”

Mike covered his other ear with a pillow and groaned. It was much too early for so much shouting, in his opinion. He hadn't heard such loud shouting since they were all yelling goodbye to the Byers car and moving truck as they drove down the road, promising to come visit and call every day. Oh, right. That was why he needed to get up.

“MICHAEL!”

“I'm up, I'm up.” Mike groaned as he sat up and stretched. His mother was standing in the doorway with her arms crossed.

“I have been calling for you to get up for twenty minutes, Michael Wheeler. What are you going to do when you're in college, huh? Am I going to have to come to your dorm to wake you up?”

“I'm a teenager, Aunt Karen, it's just how our brains work. Stay up late, sleep in.” Mike yawned. “And yes, I packed last night.”

“Good. Now get dressed and come down for breakfast.” Karen turned around and started banging on Nancy's door. “Nancy, come on, time to go.”

Mike finished his packing, ate his breakfast, and soon enough, he was in the car on the way to Maine. The Byers had been planning on

moving to Illinois, but at the last minute, Joyce decided to go to Maine instead, in honor of Bob, who had grown up in Maine in the '50s. Will just hoped they wouldn't run into Mr. Baldo while they were there. In one car was Mike, Nancy, Lucas, and Max. In another was Steve, Robin, Dustin, and the luggage.

"What do you think Derry will be like?" Lucas asked.

"I hope it has good skateboarding streets." Max looked out the window. "These ones are too bumpy."

"I'm sure it's fine there. Mrs. Byers wouldn't have moved Will there if she thought it wasn't safe," Mike reassured everyone, but mostly himself.

"I don't know... I've heard some weird things about Derry," Nancy spoke up from the driver's seat.

"Like what?" Mike turned to look at her. He was in the passenger seat.

"There were some missing kids a few years back, right before..." Nancy trailed off, but Mike knew she was trying to say "right before you moved here." Mike had never told his friends that Nancy wasn't actually his sister and that his mom, dad, and younger sister were actually his aunt, uncle, and cousin. Nancy didn't exactly understand why he didn't just tell them, but she respected his wishes and kept it a secret.

"Like Hawkins kind of missing or like your-everyday-kidnapper kind of missing?" Lucas asked from the back seat, earning a slap on the arm from Max.

"I don't know. It was only for about a year though, it all stopped in 1989." Nancy stopped, then said, "Well, there was one weird story from a couple years after..."

"What is it?" Mike was getting a really bad feeling about Derry.

"It was in January, 1991. There was this boy, Bill Denbrough. He was your age I think. It wasn't a big story or anything, just a couple boys calling all the Sheriff's departments in the surrounding states. Must've

taken them weeks. I was in the building when Hopper got the call, it was just after the fight with Jonathan and Steve, so I overheard the story. Apparently, those two boys were the only ones in town that remembered his existence. Nobody else recognized the name, not even his parents. It was like he had never existed. And a couple years before, back during the whole thing in 1989, his brother went missing too, except they found his body in the sewer. He had his right arm ripped off. He was only six years old, poor thing. They never found a body for Bill, but I think his friends stopped looking after a while. Hopper had dismissed the story as either a prank call or the boys being on drugs or something, but I'm not so sure. It sounds kind of similar to what happened in Hawkins, but... also not."

The car sat in a stunned silence after Nancy finished the story.

"Did Joyce know about this?" Mike asked quietly.

Nancy shook her head. "It wasn't in the news or anything. Like I said, everyone just... forgot. I would've told her, but I didn't really start researching it until after they left." They all fell quiet again.

Lucas broke the silence by simply saying, "Shit."

Max laughed humorlessly. "Yeah. Shit."

Mike stared out the window again. "Do you think we should tell Mrs. Byers?"

"I don't know." Nancy shifted her hands on the steering wheel, turn signal clicking as she turned right. "I think we should scout out the town first, see if there's actually anything to be concerned about. We don't want to worry her if it turns out to be nothing. We should definitely tell El though."

Mike, Lucas, and Max all nodded. Before Nancy could say anything else, the only other car they had seen since they left Indiana passed them. It was blasting some rock song. Mike winced at the volume. "How can people stand to have the volume that loud? Doesn't it hurt their ears?"

Nancy shrugged. "Sometimes it's nice to not be able to hear anything

else. Maybe that was their favorite song or something.”

Lucas nodded. “Sounds like something Jonathan and Will would listen to.”

Nancy turned left, into the empty parking lot of a small motel. “Mom said she didn’t want us driving after dark, so she reserved some rooms here for us. C’mon, everybody out. We’ll keep driving tomorrow.”

Everyone got out of the two cars and stretched, moaning about how their legs and necks hurt from sitting so long. Nancy rolled her eyes and walked into the lobby, going straight to the front desk. There was an old woman who looked half asleep sitting there.

“Hello, I’m checking in for a reservation under the name Wheeler.”

The woman smiled kindly and moved her chair in front of the computer, pushing her glasses up on her nose. “How many rooms was it?”

“One double room and one double with a pull out couch.”

“Okay, dear, let me find that for you. It’ll just take a moment.”

“Thank you.” Nancy smiled and looked at the bulletin board behind the desk. It had all sorts of pictures on it, mostly of nature, a couple postcards, some business cards, and a bunch of random pins, but one of the postcards stood out the most to Nancy. It was a nature background, probably somewhere nearby, with a waterfall and tons of trees. The card was worn and dirty, but Nancy could still make out the words printed on the front in white cursive.

*“No one who dies in Derry ever really dies!”*

Nancy stared for another second, then turned back to the woman, who was holding out two keys.

“Here you go, dear. Rooms 237 and 217. Sorry we couldn’t get them next to each other.”

“That’s fine. Thanks.” Nancy turned and went out the doors again,

telling the rest of the group to get inside.

Shortly after they had settled into their rooms - Nancy, Steve and Robin in the double with a pull out couch, Mike, Dustin, Lucas, and Max in the other double - they turned out the lights. But long after the room had been drowned in darkness, Mike still laid awake - and Max rolling on top of him in her sleep every five seconds was only part of the reason.

He was worried about Will. Derry sounded like bad news. Even before he knew all the stories from Nancy, he didn't like Derry, but now that he knew the stories, he hated it. He hated it with a passion, and he wanted Will out.

When he finally drifted to sleep, he dreamed of red balloons, arcades, and clowns.

## 10. Stan

### Notes for the Chapter:

CW: verbal abuse, references to abuse

“Alright, Syd, pack your shit. We’re going to Maine.”

Stan hadn’t even thought about his options before inviting Dina and Sydney to come to Maine with him. He just had a feeling he would need them there. Immediately after his conversation with his uncle, he stole the car and drove to Dina’s, then to Sydney’s. Stealing a car probably wasn’t the best idea, but he was mad, he was stubborn, and he was rebellious.

That morning, everything had been as fine as it could be. Stan’s uncle had woken him up by slamming his door open and telling him to get his ass downstairs so they could talk. Stan, knowing what was best for him, got out of bed and went downstairs, then sat at the dining table with his uncle. He couldn’t remember the last time they had sat there together.

“So, you little shit, you’re going back to your parents.”

Stan’s jaw dropped. “What? Why?”

“You talking back to me?”

“No, sir. I’m just wondering why I’m going back.”

His uncle scowled and leaned back in his chair, crossing his arms. “Parents want you back. Didn’t tell me why. Hardly even sounded like them on the phone.”

“Okay... when am I leaving?”

“Tomorrow. I don’t want any of your shit left behind here, got it?”

“Okay.”

“Go pack.”

Stan frowned. "I thought I wasn't leaving until tomorrow, can't I pack then?"

"No."

"Well why not?"

Stan's uncle cut him off by slamming his hands on the table. Stan shrunk away from him and stopped talking.

"GO PACK!" his uncle yelled. Stan quickly ran back to his room and started throwing things in a suitcase. At first, as he packed, he was scared. He didn't know why his uncle was so much more angry than usual, he didn't know why his parents wanted him back, and he didn't know how he was going to survive them on his own. But the longer he packed, the angrier he got. His parents couldn't send him away and then expect him to just come crawling back to them whenever they asked him to! That was bullshit!

Stan scowled and aggressively closed his last bag. He then tossed it out the window of his one-story house and climbed out after it. He got all the way to the car, then froze as he remembered something. He needed the keys. The keys were inside. So was his uncle. Stan took a deep breath and started for the door, then froze again and turned back to the car. Something had jingled next to the steering wheel.

The keys.

Stan thanked every force above, including some turtle for some reason, and threw his bags in the car. He was just barely turning the corner to Dina's house as his uncle ran out of the house and started yelling.

So that's where he was now. Sydney's house, throwing her clothes in a suitcase while trying to explain what was going on. He explained that Dina was coming, realized that he had forgotten to ask Eddie, and flopped down onto Sydney's bed when she left the room to convince Liam to come along. As he laid there, he blinked back the tears that had been forming in his eyes since he arrived. He didn't want to show weakness, because *Stan wasn't weak*. Weakness only



made things worse, in his experience, so he tried to hide it as much as possible, even when he was alone.

He held his tears in all the way out of the Novak house, down the road to Dina's house, and for the first few hours of driving down the highway. They only fell when Liam asked about Mr. Barber and Stan's parents. Stan had always been good at silent crying, so he didn't sniff or breath ragged. He just subtly wiped the tears away and blinked, then said, "No, he's my uncle. My parents live in Maine. They... I guess they just got tired of me or something, so they sent me to live with him."

He shrugged away Dina's condolences and changed the subject, asking if they wanted to keep driving or stop for the night. When they decided to keep driving, Stan nodded and cranked up the volume on the radio, which was playing Fly by Bloodwitch. Fly had always been his go to song for drowning out thoughts. They passed two cars - the one in the front was driven by a brunette woman with short hair and bangs, the one in the back was driven by a brunette man with seemingly perfect hair. Stan was surprised to see anyone else out driving that late, especially with the back of one of the cars packed full of suitcases and bags, but he just kept driving.

Barely being heard over the music, Liam spoke up from the backseat. "Look, there's another one." He pointed to a small sign a bit down the road. As Stan got closer, he was able to read it, and what it said gave everyone in the car chills, but especially Stan and Beverly.

*"YOU'LL FLOAT TOO, LOSERS!"*

## 11. Bill

### Notes for the Chapter:

CW: slight neglect

Nobody ever asked Jacob Thrombey why he never spoke.

His entire family assumed he hated them or hated everyone or just hated the universe, but really he just didn't feel like it. He had spent enough years getting made fun of for his stutter, so he avoided talking as much as possible. Meg was the only one in his family who he talked in front of, because, as much as they hated each other, she was a surprisingly good speech therapist. But she was gone now, ran away from their insane family, so he didn't talk much at home.

They also never asked about his past. This was something that Jacob appreciated for three reasons. One, he couldn't remember anything from before age 15, two, he really didn't want to talk about what happened in that year he went missing, and three, if they asked, he would have to talk.

Jacob had tried everything to remember those missing 15 years, but no matter how hard he tried, nothing came back. Not even a hint of a memory would show up, just a headache. He figured going to the place he grew up would help, but he couldn't remember where he grew up, so that was useless. To make matters worse, the family he was living with now didn't know he existed until a few months ago, so they were no help with childhood things. They didn't even know his name from before the Maze, so they just renamed him Jacob.

Jacob spent most of his time reading or on the phone with his closest friends who, very inconveniently, lived all the way across the country in Beacon Hills, California. Thomas, Minho, and Brenda were their names. He had met them during the year he went missing, and he'd spoken to them every single day since then.

One night, in June of 1993, Jacob excused himself from the dinner table early so he could call his friends. He knew it annoyed his Aunt and Uncle when he did this, but he really couldn't care less.

*"Hey, Mike, is that you?"* A voice crackled through the phone.

*"Yeah, M-Min, it's me."* Jacob smiled as he spoke.

*"Min, give me the phone."*

*"No, I just said hi like two seconds ago! Let me keep talking to him!"*

There was a scuffle on the other side of the phone, then someone new grabbed it.

*"Hey, Mike, it's Thomas!"*

Jacob laughed. "Hi, T-Thomas, w-wuh-what's up?"

*"Our school is doing some stupid summer trip to this tiny ass town in Maine next week and we figured it would be a ton more fun if you came, so... do you wanna come?"*

"I mean... I'd h-have to ask b-but..." Jacob thought about what he had to do next week. *Absolutely nothing.* "I think I'm f-free for the next few w-w-weeks."

There was muffled cheering in the background of the call, then Thomas shushing Minho and Brenda. *"Okay, sounds good! We'll see you in a week!"*

*"Suh-see you then."*

Thomas hung up, and Jacob returned the phone to its wall mount, then returned to the dining room.

"H-hey, I'm going to Muh-M-Maine next wuh-w-week, is that okay?" Jacob asked his Aunt and Uncle. His Aunt was reading some cookbook that Jacob didn't care to read the title of and his Uncle was doing work.

"Yeah, fine, Jacob," his Aunt said dismissively. His Uncle grunted in agreement. Jacob rolled his eyes and went upstairs to his bedroom, making sure to slam the door behind him before grabbing his suitcase and beginning to pack.

A week later, Jacob talked the school bus driver into letting him get on for the ride to Maine. The kids from Beacon Hills had just gotten off the plane and onto a bus. After a few minutes of bribery, with some help from the pack, Jacob was allowed onto the bus. He got on and went to the back where Thomas, Minho, and Brenda were sitting, and the three Gladers introduced Jacob to the pack.

Mike seemed weirdly familiar, but Jacob didn't think anything of it.

## 12. Mike

Mike was zoned out again.

He did that a lot these days. He usually didn't think about anything in particular, he just let his thoughts drift, but today, he was focused on one thing. His childhood - or, lack thereof. He knew he had had some sort of childhood, but he couldn't remember the majority of it. In fact, he could only remember that he had lived on a farm with his grandfather until he passed away. He didn't know where the farm was, why he didn't live with his parents, what school he went to, if he had any friends, or anything other than the basic facts.

Mike had a feeling that Eds and Richie were somehow related to his past - why else would he have automatically said those names? - but he didn't know why. Were they friends? Siblings? Bullies? Acquaintances? Something else entirely? Mike had no idea, and zoning out was doing nothing to help him remember. The only thing it was doing was getting him in trouble.

"Mr. Hanlon!" The history teacher dropped a very heavy book, a dictionary, on Mike's desk, making a loud bang and causing him to jump. "Can you tell me what I just said?"

"Uh..." Mike looked around, trying to get context from a projector screen, writing on the whiteboard, anything, but there was nothing. "Well, sir, you just asked me what you just said, and that was the most recent thing you said." Mike smiled up at the teacher, hoping to win him over. He was not amused, and his scowl deepened when Scott snorted across the classroom.

"Thank you for that insightful statement, Mr. Hanlon. Back on topic please." He returned to the front of the classroom and showed a map of Maine on the projector. A town named Derry was circled in red marker. "We've had an anonymous donor to our field trip fund, so we are now able to take a trip to a historical town! We've chosen Derry for this year's trip." The bell interrupted the teacher. "Grab a permission slip on your way out! They're due on Friday, so please get them signed as soon as you can!"

Mike motioned for the pack member that had that class - Scott, Stiles, Minho, Brenda, Lydia, and Malia - to go ahead without him. They all agreed, and waited outside the classroom for Mike. Mike took extra long packing his things up, waiting for everyone to leave. By the time he was at the front of the room, grabbing his permission slip, the rest of the students had left.

“Where will we be staying during this trip?” Mike asked the teacher.

“You’ll be having host families for the two weeks we’ll spend there. There will be two students with each family.”

Mike nodded. “Thanks.” Then he left the room and met the pack outside the door.

“What was that about?” Malia asked.

“Just wondering where we were staying. I don’t know about this field trip. Something seems...” Mike hesitated. He didn’t want the pack to think something was wrong with him - considering the fact that they had just defeated the most recent threat in Beacon Hills, The Wild Hunt, he didn’t want them to be stressed about something new so soon.

“Something seems what?” Lydia put a comforting hand on Mike’s arm. “Mike, what’s wrong?”

“It’s...” Mike sighed. “It’s Derry. Something about it just seems off. Like we shouldn’t be going there. I don’t know, I’m probably just paranoid after the whole Wild Hunt thing.” Mike lowered his voice at the end of his sentence.

“Let’s go in here.” Scott led the pack into an empty locker room as they passed it and locked the door behind them, then turned back to Mike. “Exactly what do you mean by ‘off?’”

Mike shrugged. He didn’t like having all the attention on him. “I don’t know, it just gives me a weird feeling. Like something is wrong with it. Or like it’s really familiar. Almost...”

“Almost like you’ve been there before.” Stiles finished for Mike. Mike looked up at him in surprise, and Stiles nodded. “That’s exactly how I

felt when I got back here after having my memories wiped.”

“Yeah, and sort of like how we all felt when Stiles was taken by The Hunt,” Lydia spoke up.

“I guess that could make sense,” Mike said slowly. He had never told the pack about his missing memories. “I... I never told you guys, but... I don’t exactly remember anything from before about two years ago.”

“What do you mean? Like nothing at all?” Scott asked.

“No, there’s a few things, like my grandpa and the farm, but otherwise, it’s all gone. Maybe I grew up in Derry or something.”

“Maybe-“ Stiles cut off his sentence and froze, staring right behind Mike’s shoulder. “Mike, don’t move.”

“What?” Mike asked, his heart speeding up. “What is it?”

“Minho, do you see it?” Stiles pointed over Mike’s shoulder.

“No.” Minho shook his head and squinted. “There’s nothing there, Thomas.” Minho still called Stiles Thomas every once in a while, and it was very confusing to the rest of the pack, who still had no idea what happened to Stiles when he went missing.

“Stiles,” Lydia put her hand on Stiles’ shoulder, “is it a Ghost Rider?”

Stiles shook his head. “No, no, those are all gone. It’s...”

“The Clown.” Mike finished for him. Stiles nodded and his eyes widened.

“Okay, Mike, I think you need to move now because it’s walking towards you.”

Mike turned around and stumbled backwards. The clown grinned, drool dripping from its mouth.

“Hi, Mikey, wanna float?”

“Hell no,” Mike growled.

“Oh, well that’s too bad, isn’t it? Don’t you want to join Eddie and Richie and Buh-Buh-Billy and Stan and Benny and Bevvv? Don’t you misssss them?” It stepped closer again, holding a single red balloon in front of him.

“Scott,” Malia said nervously, looking around the room, “what’s going on?”

“I don’t know,” Scott replied. “I can’t see whatever it is they’re seeing!”

It opened its mouth and three balls of light spun forward. Before Mike or Stiles could even ask what they were, Lydia’s eyes rolled back in her head and she lifted off of the ground.

“LYDIA!” Stiles shouted, running over to her and grabbed her ankles before she could float out of reach. He turned back to Mike. “What the hell is happening?”

“I don’t know,” Mike shouted back. Then, “Someone with a strong emotional connection to her has to kiss her or something!”

Mike didn’t know how he had thought of that, but when Stiles pulled Lydia back to the ground and kissed her, she gasped and her eyes went back to normal.

“W-What happened?” She asked. Stiles hugged her tightly, glad she was okay. Mike turned back to the clown, which was giggling.

“Isn’t this fun, Mikey? Don’t you want to go see Georgie again? Don’t you want to floooat?”

“You’re just a stupid clown,” Mike shouted. “Nothing but a clown! You don’t scare me!”

“Oh, but I scare your friends. I can smell their fear.” Pennywise grinned and stepped towards Mike. Mike, who was standing in front of the rest of the pack, put his arms out to the sides and made them step back too.



“I’m gonna fucking kill y-“

Before Mike could finish his threat, the door opened, everyone turned in that direction, and Derek walked in.

“Hey, what’s going on?”

Mike looked back in front of him, but It was gone.

“It’s gone. Okay, we should be fine. We’re fine.” Mike reassured himself and everyone else. Derek looked at him confusedly.

“What?”

Mike was still thinking about that moment several days later as he sat on the airplane, which was about halfway to Derry. He knew something about that clown was familiar, even though he and Stiles were the only ones who could see it. He figured it probably had something to do with his past that he couldn’t remember, but he wasn’t sure. He just wanted to get to Derry and figure out what the fuck happened to his childhood.

## 13. Eddie

### Notes for the Chapter:

CW: nightmares, violence

Eddie, in general, didn't dream very much. And whenever he did dream, it was a nightmare.

He hadn't dreamt for weeks, months, maybe, but then all of a sudden, he had the most vivid dream he could remember ever having.

*It started nice and peaceful, just showing Dream-Eddie asleep in his bed, but then, everything went to shit when Dream-Eddie woke up. All the windows shattered, everything flew off of the shelves, and all of his siblings were gone. Dream-Eddie ran for cover in the closet, but when he got in and shut the door, it exploded in blinding white light and started violently shaking. Dream-Eddie was screaming - Real-Eddie was screaming too, no doubt. As suddenly as it had started, the light went pitch black, the shaking stopped, and Eddie was no longer in his closet.*

*He was in a void.*

*It was pitch black all around him, save for one prick of light in the distance. The ground was wet with about an inch of standing water. It was freezing cold and there was no breeze. There was no noise apart from his own breathing, erratic heartbeat, and the faint sloshing of the water.*

*"HELP ME!" he screamed into the darkness, but no one was there. "SOMEONE, PLEASE, HELP ME!"*

Real-Eddie had started shifting around in his bed, whimpering and muttering, "Help me, please, I need to get out," waking up Billy, who was sleeping across the room.

Billy rubbed his eyes and sat up halfway. "Eddie, you okay?" Real-Eddie just whimpered again.

*Dream-Eddie heard Billy's whispering and tried to yell for help, but then Billy was gone, and there was a new whispering. Children, it sounded like, but something else too. Something distorted and gravelly, but also shrill at*

*the same time. Something terrifying.*

*"You'll float too. We all float down here. You'll float too."*

*"You'll float too," Real-Eddie mumbled, pressing his fingernails into the palms of his hands. Billy was fully sitting up now.*

*"Come float with us, Eddie," the whispers said softly. The light in the distance came closer. Dream-Eddie ran towards the light, still screaming, "HELP ME!" His throat was raw now, and he was losing his voice, but he kept yelling nonetheless, desperate for someone, anyone, to help him. "PLEASE," he sobbed, falling to the ground in front of the light. His pajamas had been drenched in water, but they were still dry.*

*The light dissolved into an intersection. 'Jackson' and 'Witcham,' according to the street signs. Dream-Eddie turned in circles, looking for any signs of people around him. Finally, he saw a little boy down the street. He wore a yellow raincoat and green galoshes, and he was chasing a small paper boat. Written on the boat, Dream-Eddie noticed, was 'S.S. GEORGIE.'*

*The boy, Georgie, Dream-Eddie assumed, chased the boat down the river of water next to the sidewalk, following it until it slipped into a hole in the curb. He yelled as it went down, then fell to his knees in front of the sewer. As Dream-Eddie cautiously walked closer to the boy, a pair of yellow eyes glowed in the dark, the voice connected to them talking to Georgie. Georgie just wanted his boat back.*

*Dream-Eddie watched in horror as the sewer monster, which he now recognized as a clown, lured the boy closer, ripped off his arm, and pulled him down into the darkness. Dream-Eddie collapsed to his knees in front of the sewer and screamed.*

*"GEORGIE!"*

*"Georgie, no," Real-Eddie sobbed. Billy walked over to his bed and sat on the edge.*

*"Eddie? Eddie, you need to wake up."*

*Dream-Eddie could still hear the clown's laughs and Georgie's screams as they got further and further away. He still shouted for Georgie, but*

*screamed in fear when the yellow eyes reappeared.*

*“Come float, Eddie.”*

*Dream-Eddie slipped down into the sewer, and once again, he was in the void.*

*This time, the scene was a car on the highway. A boy with curly brown hair, a girl with short red hair, a girl with curly black hair, and a small boy with curly blonde hair sit inside, dancing and singing to the music that is playing. They’re all smiling, all happy. Dream-Eddie knew that wouldn’t last long.*

*In a hotel off of the highway, a boy with messy black hair shoves a sleeping girl with long red hair off of him. He sighs and squeezes his eyes shut. A tear falls from one of them. The boy stands and walks into the bathroom, muffling his crying with a fluffy towel. Dream-Eddie wanted to know what was wrong, he wanted to help, but he couldn’t. Not now, anyway.*

*Further down the road, there’s a school bus. In the very back rows of the bus, there’s a group of kids. A boy with straight auburn hair, a boy with brown hair, a boy with curly blonde hair, a boy with dark brown hair, a girl with strawberry blonde hair, a girl with wavy dark brown hair, two boys with curly black hair, and a few more. Almost everyone’s faces are blurry. The only ones focused are the boy with straight auburn hair and the older boy with curly black hair. They both look uneasy and scared, like something terrible is going to happen. Dream-Eddie felt the same way.*

*At the end of the road is a town. Derry. A boy sits next to a girl in the library. They’re laughing, they look happy.*

*Dream-Eddie was getting dizzy. He didn’t know how many more setting changes he could handle.*

*“C’mon, Eddie, wake up! It’s just a dream!” Billy shook Real-Eddie’s shoulders. Real-Eddie thrashed around and pushed Billy’s hands away.*

*“Billy, what’s going on?” Rosa and Victor rushed into the room when they heard the yelling.*

"I don't know, he won't wake up!"

*Dream-Eddie could feel the hands grabbing at him. The clown's hands. He pushed them away and ran in the opposite direction, back into the void. The only thing he could see was... a turtle?*

*"Where am I? Please, help me!" Dream-Eddie ran to the turtle (for some reason).*

*"You have to go back, Eddie. And bring Billy, he might be able to help." The turtle spoke (somehow).*

*"Back where?" Dream-Eddie cried, still pushing the hands away from him.*

*"Back to Derry, Eddie. They need you. People will die if you don't go back. Go. Now."*

*"But why? Why are people dying?"*

*"Go, Eddie." The turtle disappeared, and Dream-Eddie dropped to his knees where it had just been.*

*"I don't understand!" he sobbed, searching the water for the turtle. "HELP ME!"*

*"EDDIE!"*

Real-Eddie jolted upright and continued screaming and sobbing, backing quickly into the corner, away from the reaching hands.

"NO, NO, I CAN'T- I DON'T- HELP ME."

"Eddie, it's Rosa, you're okay."

Eddie continued to push the hands away, not convinced that it wasn't the clown. Rosa took the hint and told everyone to stop trying to grab Eddie. Everyone (they had all woken up at that point) backed away and let Eddie calm down and wake up all the way.

"Eddie," Rosa said quietly after a moment, "can you tell me what happened?"

"It... it was so dark... and so cold... and..." Eddie sniffed, staring off into space with wide eyes. "There were people. People I know. They were in danger. I have to save them."

"Eddie, everyone's fine. It was just a nightmare, okay?" Mary stepped forward and held Eddie's hand.

Eddie shook his head and pulled his hand away. "No. It wasn't a nightmare. It was *real*, I *know* it. You may not believe me, but I know that it's real. I have to leave." Eddie stood up and pushed through the crowd of family standing next to his bed, grabbing his crutch and moving towards the closet. He opened the closet and pulled out a suitcase and a shoe box, then moved to the dresser.

"Where do you need to go?" Pedro asked.

"Derry." Eddie threw some clothes in the suitcase and went into the bathroom for his toiletries. "Derry, Maine."

"Eddie, honey, that's a twelve hour drive," Rosa grabbed his hands and stopped him from packing. "Why do you need to go?"

"I already told you, my friends are in danger. I have to go." Eddie hesitated, remembering what the turtle told him. "And Billy's coming with me."

"What?" Billy stepped through the crowd of family. "Me?"

"Yes. You."

"Well..." Victor sighed. "I guess there's no way we're talking you out of this, huh?"

"No. I'm going whether you like it or not."

Victor looked at Rosa, who shrugged, then said, "Well then I guess we'll just have to come with you."

Eddie thought for a moment. "Okay... I think that'll be okay... but you have to *stay away* while I'm dealing with things there."

"If you're safe, we'll stay away." Rosa clapped her hands and turned

to the rest of the kids. "Alright, kids, road trip! We're leaving tomorrow, so get a good nights sl-"

"No," Eddie interrupted Rosa, who raised her eyebrows at him.

"No?"

"No. We have to leave now."

"Eddie-"

"*Now.*"

Behind Darla, a book flew off of the shelf. Eddie threw an accusing glare at Billy, as if to say, *get your powers in check, dumbass*, but Billy just looked confused.

Rosa sighed. "Fine. Everybody go pack. Eddie, since you're basically done already, put some coffee on. We're gonna need energy for this."

Everyone went their separate ways to pack. Billy closed the door to the room once it was just him and Eddie left. Eddie was sitting on his bed again, shoe box in his lap. He carefully opened it and made sure everything was still there. Seeing that it was still filled to the top with photo booth pictures, postcards, a shower cap, an envelope that was still sealed that Eddie had received from someone named Richie, and a bunch of other random things, same as the day he arrived in that house, he closed the lid again and put it in his suitcase, then turned to Billy, who was staring expectantly at him.

"What? Why are you staring at me like that?"

Billy gestured to the bookshelf. "You didn't see that?"

Eddie rolled his eyes. "Of course I saw it, dumbass. Keep your powers in line next time. Someone's gonna find out."

"Eddie," Billy put the book back on the shelf, "that wasn't me. Also... your nose is bleeding."

"Shit," Eddie muttered as he grabbed a tissue. His voice became slightly nasal as he covered his nose. "I probably have internal

bleeding or some bullshit. So who was it, if it wasn't you? You think Darla has powers?"

"No, Eddie, *you*. *You* did that."

Eddie scoffed. "No I didn't, Billy. It was probably just the house shifting on its property or something. It's fine."

"Eddie-"

"Go pack, Billy. I need to make the coffee."

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

omg this chapter took forever- I hope you like it!!  
ALSO I GOT MY HAIR CUT REALLY SHORT  
WOOHOOO



## 14. the truth

### Notes for the Chapter:

I'm not gonna lie to you guys, I wrote this at 2am, so sorry if it makes no sense KFJBWFB- I'm gonna proofread tomorrow, I just wanted to get something posted. Feel free to point out any typos or anything though!

Also FRENCH ROCK MUSIC IS IMMACULATE OH MY GOD- I LOVE IT SO MUCH SERIOUSLY GO LISTEN TO "Uh autre monde" BY Téléphone IT'S SO GOOD

After passing the two cars, continuing to Derry, getting there in the middle of the night, and taking forever to find Stan's house, for he had forgotten where it was, three high schoolers and a middle schooler stood on the front porch of a nice looking, quite large, house. They had been there for a few minutes, waiting for Stan to build up the courage to knock. He didn't remember much about his parents. His mother was nice, he remembered that much, but his father... he had a feeling that his father had been the one to send him away.

Stan took a deep breath, muttered, "Now or never," and knocked on the door. There was no sound on the other side for a few minutes, which was expected, considering it was the middle of the night, then a light switched on and footsteps came toward the door. Stan stepped backward so the door could open, Dina, Sydney, and Liam moving with him, and smiled tensely as the door swung open to reveal a tired, annoyed looking man.

"What do you want? Whatever you're selling, I don't want it."

Stan sighed. "Nice to see you too, dad."

The man squinted at Stan. "Stanley?"

"Yes." Stan crossed his arms and looked over his father's shoulder. "Where's mom?"

“Dead. Why are you here?”

Stan was already exhausted from the drive, holding in his emotions, and just the fact that it was the middle of the night, so he could barely process what was happening. His father didn't recognize him, his mother was dead, and his father didn't know why he was there.

“She's what?” He finally said. “When?”

“I don't know, a while ago. Why are you here?”

“You... You called your brother and told him to send me back here for a few weeks.”

Donald squinted at Stan again. “Mm... no I didn't. Now get away from my house.”

Stan frowned. “But he said-”

“I don't care what he said! Get out of here!” Donald slammed the door in Stan's face, and Stan stumbled backwards, still in shock from all the news he had received in the past two minutes. After a moment, Dina gently grabbed his arm and steered him down the steps, across the street, and to the car. They all piled in, Dina in the driver's seat, and began to drive.

Sydney reached into the backseat and held Stan's hand as they drove. Stan smiled weakly at her, then looked out the window. They didn't know where they were driving, they just needed something to do, so they drove around the neighborhood.

It had only been a few minutes when Dina slammed on the breaks, causing everyone to abruptly pull against their seatbelts, then slam back into the seats.

“Sorry, sorry, there were some kids in the street.” She looked out the windshield and furrowed her eyebrows, unbuckling her seatbelt. “One of them tripped I think, I'm gonna go see if they're okay.”

Dina got out of the car, and the other three followed. They didn't really need to, but they were interested. In the road, a boy crouched on the ground, laughing, next to a girl who was sitting on the ground,

telling the boy to shut up.

“It’s not that funny, Ben!”

“Yes it is, you tripped on air!” Ben laughed and helped the girl up.

“Hey,” Dina called before the two teenagers could walk away. “Are you alright? I’m so sorry, I didn’t see you there. I’m Dina.”

“I’m Meg,” the girl gestured to the boy, “this is Ben, and yeah, I’m fine. Just clumsy.”

“Okay, cool. So I didn’t accidentally hit you with my car.”

The two girls laughed, but Ben didn’t join in. He was too busy squinting at Sydney and Stan, who were very confused as to why he looked so confused. Liam just looked back and forth between the five teenagers, trying to figure out what to do. Before Liam could decide on any actions, Ben gasped and ran over to Sydney and Stan, hugging them both tightly.

“Holy shit,” he cried, “I thought you were both dead or something! What the hell, why didn’t you call or write? Stan, you swore you wouldn’t forget!”

Stan and Sydney looked at each other, then back to Ben. They had definitely never met him before... right? Stan had no recollection, but Beverly... she wasn’t sure. She felt as though something about the boy was familiar, but she couldn’t place her finger on it.

Stan spoke first. “I’m sorry, I think you’re thinking of the wrong people. I don’t think we’ve met, I’m Stanley Barber and this is Sydney Novak.”

Ben wrinkled his nose. “Sydney? Why’d you change your name from Beverly?”

“I... don’t know,” Beverly whispered. Her head hurt so bad, it felt like she was about to explode with memories or something.

“You recognize me, right, Bev?” Ben asked, focusing his attention completely on Sydney. Sydney shook her head.

“Will anything jog your memory? What about the scar on your left hand? Or cleaning all the blood out of the bathroom? Or New Kids On The Block? Remember when you signed my yearbook? You were the only one that signed it, Bev. No one else cared, but you did. You helped the Losers steal all that medical supplies when Bowers attacked me and you went to the Quarry with us later that week. Then we went to my house and looked at all the history stuff and you saw my New Kids On The Block poster but you didn’t say anything because you didn’t want to embarrass me in front of the other Losers.”

Sydney, who’s eyes had begun to tear up, slowly shook her head.

“I’m sorry,” she whispered. “I don’t remember.”

Ben looked at the ground and nodded. “Okay. I’m sorry, I’ll let you go home now.”

“I’m sorry,” Sydney whispered again, turning to walk to the car, but just as she was about to open the passenger door, Ben called out one more time, and she froze.

“Your hair is winter fire,” he said. Sydney turned back around and stared at him, wide eyes as the headache faded away.

“January embers,” Ben continued, his voice begging for her to remember something, anything. Stan, Dina, Meg, and Liam were all watching the exchange in confusion, but Stan was starting to develop a headache as well. Beverly let out a sob as the memories flooded into her brain.

“My heart burns there too,” she whispered. Ben smiled widely and ran up to her, grabbing her into a hug as they both laughed sadly. Liam turned to Stan and raised an eyebrow.

“Does Sydney have a boyfriend we didn’t know about?”

Stan shrugged, then looked back up just as Beverly turned to him.

“Oh my god, Stan, I can’t believe I forgot! We’ve been hanging out all this time and I didn’t remember. Oh my god, how could I have forgotten!” She ran up to the curly-haired boy and wrapped her arms

around him, causing him to stumble backwards. Ben joined the hug, and Stan was very confused.

“Syd, what’s going on?” He asked.

“No, no, it’s not Syd, it’s Bev! Beverly! Stan, we grew up here. We grew up in Derry, and I moved away when we were thirteen, remember? You know why you have those scars around your face?”

Stan reached up to touch the side of his face and felt a line of scarred skin going up and down on either side. *Weird*. He had never noticed that before.

“It’s from Flute Lady, Stan. She fucking bit you!” Beverly and Ben laughed as the other teenagers and Liam stared at them in confusion.

“What the hell are y-” Stan’s eyes widened. “Holy shit, you’re right. It was Flute Lady. She tried to eat me or some shit because you dumbasses dragged me into that well and Mike pushed Bowers down and then Bill saw Georgie but it was actually It and It had you, Beverly, but Ben kissed you and brought you down but then It had Bill and It almost... It almost...” Stan broke down in sobs, internally scolding himself for being weak. “Holy shit, I remember. I remember everything.”

“Oh, thank god we don’t have to tell him the whole story,” Ben grinned as he pulled Stan, who was still sobbing, and Beverly in for another hug, only breaking apart when Dina cleared her throat.

“Okay, as much as I’m loving this little reunion you’re having, can someone tell me what the fuck is happening right now?” Meg and Liam nodded in agreement, waiting for an explanation.

Beverly looked at Stan and Ben, then laughed. “Looks like we’re gonna have to tell the whole story at least one more time.”

## 15. the party

The next morning, as Nancy, Steve, Robin, Dustin, and Lucas packed up the rooms, Max pulled Mike aside into the hallway.

“Hey, what’s wrong?” she asked.

Mike furrowed his eyebrows in confusion. “What do you mean?”

“I mean what’s wrong? I woke up when you got out of bed in the middle of the night and then you were crying. What happened?”

“Oh, that? That was nothing,” Mike laughed awkwardly, running a hand through his hair. “Nightmares, I guess.”

Max didn’t believe a word Mike said, but she left him alone. If he didn’t want to talk about it, she wouldn’t force him to, even if she really *really* wanted to know.

“Hm. Fine, just remember you can talk to me, okay?”

“Yeah, yeah, got it. Look, can we just go back to packing please?”

Max sighed and opened the door just as Robin opened it from the other side.

“You guys ready to go?” the older girl asked.

An hour later, the entire group was back on the road, and Mike was extremely anxious. He didn’t know exactly why he was so worried, but it felt like there was a pit of dread in his stomach that just wouldn’t go away. The closer they got to Derry, the deeper the pit got, and the paler Mike’s face got. At one point, Nancy glanced over to him - she was driving, Mike was in the passenger seat - and frowned in concern.

“Hey, why do you look like that?”

Mike scoffed. “Wow, thanks, Nance. I really appreciate that.”

Nancy rolled her eyes. “You know what I mean. Why are you all pale

and shaky and... sickly looking?”

Mike shrugged and looked out the window, trying to control his nausea. “I don’t know. Must’ve been something I ate.”

Mike knew it wasn’t something he ate. It was that stupid town. There was definitely something wrong with it, maybe even worse than Hawkins, and he did *not* want the Byers family and El staying there. He knew they were there to honor Bob, but the town was dangerous, and Mike was going to find out why.

Eventually, the two cars pulled up outside of a small house on the outskirts of town. It wasn’t anything fancy, just a two story, light blue, wooden house, but it was cute. There were tons of flowers in the garden and two rocking chairs on the porch. The tree branches outside swayed in the summer breeze, which felt nice, considering how warm it was.

The group piled out of their cars and approached the front door. Nancy knocked, they waited a moment, and then the door swung open to reveal-

“Jonathan!” Nancy stepped forward to hug the other adult tightly. “It’s so good to see you!”

Joyce stepped around Jonathan and Nancy to greet the other guests.

“Hi, everyone! Wow, it feels like it’s been forever since we saw you last!”

Mike laughed and stepped forward to hug Joyce. “Hi, Mrs. Byers. Thanks for letting us stay here.”

“Of course, sweetie. Come on, everyone inside. It’s too hot out here.”

Joyce ushered everyone inside and into the living room, where El and Will sat in front of a tray of lemonades. They both jumped up and ran to the other teenagers as soon as they came into the room. They gave hugs, sat down, drank lemonade, and told stories about their time separate in Hawkins and Derry.

Mike and El had broken up before El moved away. They both agreed

that long distance would be too hard, so even though they were sad, they decided they needed to end it. Besides, neither of them was really into the relationship anymore. They both had their eye on someone else, although they would never admit it to anyone other than each other.

Will glanced at the clock and gasped. "Oh shit, El and I were supposed to meet Ben and Meg at the park."

"Does it have to be right now?" Joyce asked as Will set down his lemonade and rushed to pull his shoes on. "Your guests just got here!"

"They said they had something big to tell me that couldn't wait." Will grabbed El's arm and pulled her to the front door. "You guys can come if you want though," he called back to the guests. They all looked at each other, making sure everyone wanted to go, then agreed. All seven of them got their shoes on and followed Will and El out the front door.

"Bye, mom, we'll be back before dinner!" Will called as he shut the door behind himself.

The large group continued down the street for twenty minutes, then arrived at the park. They were all way too warm at that point, and Lucas and Dustin had been complaining since they left the house.

"Couldn't we have just used our bikes? We put them on the back of the car literally just so we wouldn't have to walk anywhere."

El rolled her eyes. "Babies."

Dustin scoffed. "You have *superpowers*. You're not allowed to call me a baby when you have that kind of advantage."

"Telekinesis doesn't protect me from heat. We're here."

They all walked over to a group of five teenagers and a kid, who were sitting down on the grass field next to the park, beneath a large statue. Mike looked up at the statue and shivered. He felt like he had seen it before...



“So, Ben, Meg, what’s the big news?” Will asked the new kids. “And who are they?” He gestured to four of them.

“Okay, it’s kind of a long story,” the first boy Will had spoken to, Ben, laughed nervously, “and it’s kind of, well, really insane, so just... keep an open mind?”

Will nodded. “Got it. Proceed.”

Mike, who was sitting all the way at the back of the group, was still staring at the statue. It was almost like it was staring back at him...

“So... basically, over the past few years, all of my friend group from the summer of 1989 left town because of some really messed up shit, and apparently when you leave Derry, you get amnesia about anything that happened here, so none of them remembered anything.” Ben pointed to the girl with short, red hair. “This is Beverly, she’s one of them.” He pointed to the boy with curly brown hair. “That’s Stan, also one of them, and the other two are Dina, their friend, and Liam, Beverly’s younger brother. Neither Stan nor Beverly remembered me when they got here, but now they do and holy shit, we have to find the others.” Ben laughed, out of breath from the long explanation.

“That’s... woah, I mean, congrats on finding them!” Will grinned, then remembered the people sitting around him. “Oh, right, I have some new people too! This is Nancy, Robin, Steve, Dustin, Lucas, and Max. They’re from back in Hawkins, where I used to live, and they’re visiting for a few weeks.” Will looked toward the back of the group. “Hey, where’d Mike go?”

“I’m right here,” Mike called, raising his hand and scooting around the side of the group so Will could see him. The statue was scaring the shit out of him, but Will was more important.

As Mike opened his mouth to introduce himself, he was knocked over by three teenagers throwing themselves at him, all yelling various things as they did so.

“Trashmouth!”

“Oh my god, Richie!”

“Where are your glasses? How can you see?”

Mike pushed the three teenagers off of him in alarm. “What the hell are you doing?”

Beverly, Stan, and Ben sighed, realizing he didn’t remember either. The rest of the group stared in confusion, not knowing what was going on.

Stan spoke first. “You’re Richie Tozier, one of the friends who got amnesia. You used to have glasses, right? You wear contacts now?”

Mike nodded in disbelief. There was no way these people would know that unless they were telling the truth.

“Can you remember anything about your childhood?” Beverly asked, grabbing Mike’s shaking hands. Mike slowly shook his head as he realized that no, he didn’t remember his childhood.

Beverly flipped Mike’s hand over and pointed at the scar on his palm. “Remember how you got that?”

Mike stared, wide eyed, at the scar. He had never noticed it before. “It was... it was 1989... the field, and the glass... Bill cut our palms and Eddie kept telling us about the AIDS epidemic...” Richie looked up at Beverly, Stan, and Ben and gasped. “I remember! I remember you guys, holy fucking shit!”

They all hugged Richie tightly as the Hawkins group looked on in confusion.

“Uh, Mike?” Will tugged on the sleeve of Mike’s shirt. “Are you really one of the kids from here?”

Richie nodded and grinned. “Sure am! And it’s Richie. Or Rich. Only Eds gets to call me Chee. Hey, where’s Eddie? Actually, where’s everyone? Last time I checked, me and Bev were the only ones gone!”

“Well...” Ben thought, “Eddie got put in the foster care system when the doctors found out about what Mrs. K was doing, Mike went to

live with his Aunt, Uncle, and cousin in California when his grandpa died, and Bill just sort of... disappeared?" Ben shrugged. "Me and Mike asked Mr. and Mrs. D if they knew where he was, but they didn't even remember that he existed."

Richie shook his head. "That's so weird... Sounds like the work of good old It if you ask me."

Ben, Beverly, and Stan all nodded solemnly, then Nancy cleared her throat.

"Actually, I knew that Mike was Richie."

Richie quickly turned to her. "*What?*"

"Well, not really... The thing is, on the day you met Will, Dustin, and Lucas, you told them your name was Mike Wheeler and that I was your sister. You told the entire family to just pretend that you were Mike Wheeler, so we did. You eventually got the amnesia, I guess, so you genuinely thought your name was Mike and you were a Wheeler. We all knew you were Richie Tozier, but we didn't know where you came from."

"Wait a minute," Max interrupted, "Mike isn't a Wheeler?"

"It's Richie," Richie corrected, "and no, I'm not. Aunt Karen is my Aunt, not my mom. Uncle Ted is my Uncle and Nancy and Holly are my cousins."

"Not Mike?" El asked.

Richie shook his head. "Not Mike. Richie."

"Richie," El repeated.

"Yup, exactly," Richie laughed and threw his arm around his childhood friends' shoulders. "Man, Hawkins really locked away my signature Trashmouth humor, didn't it?"

Stan groaned. "Oh god, please don't bring that back. I could live without a your mom joke every five seconds."

“But how could I live without your mother, Stanley?”

“My mother is dead, Richard, so you tell me.”

“Then I must die as well,” Richie cried dramatically as he flopped back onto the grass. Beverly, Ben, Meg, Dina, and Liam laughed, Stan rolled his eyes, and the Hawkins people continued to be confused. They had *never* seen Mike like this. He was so... *extroverted*.

“I’ve gotta say,” Robin spoke up, “I like Richie better than Mike.”

“Hm.” Richie propped himself up on his elbows and nodded thoughtfully. “Don’t know if I should take that as an insult or a compliment, but thank you.”

“Hey, you know what we should do?”

“What should we do, Benny-Boy?”

“We should fix up the clubhouse!”

Richie grinned, remembering all the time he and Eddie spent fighting over the hammock. “Splendid idea! Shall we?”

Everyone stood up, despite most of them being really fucking confused, and followed the four reunited friends towards the woods. They were almost there when something stopped them.

A tree falling over and almost crushing them.

## 16. remembering

### Notes for the Chapter:

I didn't proof read this so... let me know if I need to change anything!

CW: mentions of abuse and one instance of abuse (Sonia forcing Eddie to take medicine he doesn't need, but it's not really Sonia, it's Pennywise)

As the old van slowly made its way down the dark road, Eddie became more and more impatient.

He tried to pass the time by reading bumper stickers and counting license plate states, but after a while, there were no more cars around them. They stopped a few times for bathroom breaks, food, switching drivers, and stretching legs, but Eddie couldn't shake the fear left over from his nightmare, and he kept getting those *stupid* nosebleeds.

"How long until we get there?" he asked for the third time that hour. They had been driving for a *long* time, and it was around noon at that point.

Darla laughed and grinned at him. "I thought the youngest kid was supposed to ask 'are we there yet?'"

Eddie sighed and looked out the window just as they passed a sign that said, "WELCOME TO DERRY!" They had passed another sign a while back, welcoming them to Hampden. There had been another sign shortly after the welcome sign, but the writing had been too distorted for them to read it.

"We're almost there, Eddie, don't worry," Rosa said reassuringly from the driver's seat. Eddie nodded and looked up at the blue sky, trying to name clouds to distract himself.

In the van, Rosa drove, Victor sat in the passenger seat, Eddie, Darla, and Mary sat in the middle row, and Pedro, Billy, and Eugene sat in the back row. Victor, Pedro, Billy, and Eugene were asleep, but Eddie, Darla, Mary, and Rosa - obviously, because she was driving -

remained awake.

“So... Eddie...” Mary said carefully, “you ready to tell us about that vision you had?”

Eddie hesitated, then, still looking out the window, said, “I don’t know if I can. It’s like... well, every time I try to remember, I get this terrible headache and I get so scared, but it’s... it’s a familiar scary, like I’ve definitely felt it before. It would’ve been before I came to live with you guys. But... they needed my help. They were in danger.”

“Who was in danger?” Rosa asked.

“My friends.”

“Who? Like Dina, Sydney, and Stan?”

“Not...” Eddie sighed. The headache was coming back. “Not quite. Stan, definitely yes. Sydney... I don’t know. Something about her is... foggy, I guess would be the best way to describe it. Dina is fine... probably. But they’re not in danger in Pennsylvania. They’re in Maine, I know they are. I sound crazy, I know.”

“I believe you, Eddie,” Rosa reassured the scared boy, “we all do. Why else would we have driven all the way to Maine in the middle of the night?”

Eddie laughed for the first time since before the nightmare and looked away from the window, towards the front seat. When he looked forward, he saw that Darla had fallen asleep. “Yeah, thank you for that. I can’t believe you all just dropped everything to drive to Maine with me.”

“That’s what family’s for, kid.” Rosa smiled at Eddie in the rearview mirror, and Eddie smiled back at her. He was so lucky to have someone like her taking care of him instead of his terrible biological mother - who, he realized as he was thinking about this, he didn’t remember a thing about.

“Hey, Rosa...” Eddie looked back out the window. “When they gave me to you, did they tell you anything about my parents or my

childhood? Or my leg?"

"Hm..." Rosa tapped her fingers on the steering wheel. "Well, your father had passed away a long time ago. They didn't say much about your mother, just that she was abusive and gave you all sorts of placebo medicine. She's in prison now, which is good. They didn't say anything about where you came from, how you hurt your leg, or any friends you had. Why, don't you know all this stuff?"

Eddie slowly shook his head. "No... I don't remember. Actually, I don't remember anything from before I moved in with you guys. I just know that whatever it was, it was bad. Like, *really* bad. Terrifying." He hesitated, then continued. "I think it has something to do with Derry. I think Derry is the reason why I can't remember."

"Well, it also could've been all those unnecessary drugs your mother was putting in you," Mary pointed out.

Eddie laughed. "Yeah, could've been that too."

The car rolled to a stop and Rosa turned around to face the back of the car, smiling.

"Rise and shine, sleeping beauties! We're here!"

The rest of the family slowly woke up and got out of the car. They had parked in the middle of town, right next to a large park. There weren't a ton of people there, but there was a rather large group of teens (accompanied by a few adults and a kid) sitting in the grass. Eddie didn't pay attention to them though. He had started walking down the street, letting his instinct lead him.

Realizing that Eddie wouldn't answer their calls, which were asking where he was going, the rest of the family closed up the car and followed him, observing the neighborhood as they walked.

After a few minutes of walking, Eddie stopped in front of a small house, eyes wide and face pale.

Billy stepped up behind him and put a cautious hand on his shoulder. "Hey, Eddie, what's going on?"

“Th-this is it,” Eddie replied shakily. “This is where I grew up. This is my house.”

Eddie was starting to remember things now. He remembered that window around the side of the house, the one that the boy with messy, black hair had climbed in almost every day. He remembered the front door, which was almost always locked because “his allergies were too bad” or “the neighbors had just cut the grass” or “it was too cold outside.” The doors that imprisoned him. He remembered the medicine cabinet, which he could see through the front window, which had always been full and practically overflowing with placebo (gazebo) medicine.

When he looked around the back of the house to see the yard, what he saw standing there scared him so badly that he jumped backward, knocking into Billy.

It was his mother, and she was holding the nightly pill tray.

“C’mon, Eddie-Bear,” she called sweetly, “we don’t have to do this the hard way, do we?”

“NO!” Eddie screamed, and it was like he could feel a surge of energy going out from him.

“Woah, everybody, look out!” Billy yelled. The family ran out of the way just as a tree fell where they had been standing. Billy turned to Eddie and frowned in concern.

“Eddie,” he said quietly, “what did you see?”

“I saw her,” Eddie whispered, shuddering, “I saw my mother. She had the... the pills and she was t-trying to make me- make me-” Eddie couldn’t finish the sentence, and Billy saw that. He just hugged the shorter boy, and gestured for the rest of the family to join them, which they did.

And that was how the Losers found them: in a group hug in front of a knocked down tree.

“Woah,” the boy with perfect hair from the car in Eddie’s nightmare said as the group approached the yard. “What the hell happened



here?”

“Rotting roots probably,” Rosa said with a smile. “I’m Rosa.”

“I’m Will, and this is Mi- oops, sorry. Richie, Dustin, Lucas, Max, El, Steve, Robin, Nancy, Beverly, Stan, Dina, and Liam.” The boy with the bowl cut, Will, pointed to everyone as he introduced them, then laughed. “Sorry, I know it’s a lot of names to keep track of.”

“Wait,” Eddie stepped out from behind his family, who had broken out of their hug when the new group approached the yard, “did you say Richie?”

Will nodded and pointed to the back of the group, where Richie was fake-fighting Beverly - they were forcing Stan and Ben to be the referees. Eddie broke out in a grin and rushed forward, shoving all the other people out of the way, just wanting to get to Richie.

Just before Eddie ran into him, Richie looked up and his face lit up.

“Eds!”

“Chee!”

Eddie hadn’t realized how much he missed Richie until he remembered. Of course he had missed all the Losers, but *especially* Richie. Now he knew who that letter from the box was from. He just had to open it, if he ever got the guts to. It seemed really important for some reason, even though Eddie had no idea what it said. The point was, Eddie missed Richie, and Richie missed Eddie.

As Eddie ran towards Richie, it felt like everyone else disappeared. The only people there were him and Richie, as far as he knew. And as Richie held out his arms to Eddie, he could practically feel his heart leap into his throat. He had definitely had small crushes before, like El and Will and that random girl from summer camp, but this was different. Richie Tozier was fully, irrevocably, undeniably in love with Eddie Kaspbrak.

Eddie crashed into Richie, causing the two boys to stumble backward, and wrapped his arms around the taller boy’s waist. Richie wrapped his arms around Eddie’s neck and rested his head on top of the

shorter boy's.

"I can't believe it's you, Eddie," Richie whispered. "I never want to leave you or any of the other Losers again."

"Me either," Eddie whispered back, hugging Richie tighter.

After a moment, Beverly, Ben, and Stanley joined too. They were all grinning and laughing, happy to be together again - especially Richie and Eddie. The groups who had already been in Derry smiled as they watched the teenagers, knowing the situation (sort of), but the new group were very confused.

"Eddie, who are they?" Darla asked, pointing at Richie, Stanley, Ben, and Beverly.

"They're some of my friends - well, more like family - from before I came to live with you guys!" Eddie responded, still hugging Richie.

Richie looked down at the asthmatic boy and laughed. "Jeez, Eds, when did ya get so clingy?"

Eddie blushed and started to back away, but Richie pulled him back for another hug.

"Twas only a joke, darling," he said in a British accent. Then, normally, "I missed you."

"I missed you too. Even your disgusting humor."

"Well, before these lovebirds start making out or something," Ben joked (Richie and Eddie both blushed, but didn't stop hugging), "why don't we go to the clubhouse? It's this hideout place in the woods we used to hang out in all the time. We can explain everything you don't know yet and try to bring back some more of Eddie's memory."

Everyone agreed, and the growing mob of people continued towards the clubhouse.

(Richie and Eddie may have walked at the back of the group so they could hold hands, but no one mentioned it.)

## Notes for the Chapter:

My chapters are getting so much longerrr aren't you proud of me?

Also sorry my updating schedule is like all over the place bfbwkw most of these chapters get written at like 2am so I have to edit them and make them actually make sense-

Anyway I WATCHED DEAD POETS SOCIETY TODAY- DUDE IT WAS SO GOOD BUT ALSO SAD, LIKE WHAT THE HELL?? AND I LOVE MEEKS so now my comfort movies are It 2017, It 2019, and Dead Poets Society.

ALSO I have braces and a few days ago I got those rubber bands that go from the top to the bottom so it's like pulling my mouth shut and moving my jaw around or some shit and it hurts SO BAD-

so yeah, love you all, thanks for reading <33

(also for whoever needs to hear it, 1. drink some water and get a snack please, 2. I'm so proud of you :), 3. you deserve the world and I love you <33)

OKAY SORRY I'LL GO NOW WIIUVDQW BYE